REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance of the present application in view of the foregoing amendments and following remarks are respectfully requested.

Currently, claims 1-35 are pending in the present application, including independent claims 1, 12, 13, 14, 23 and 31. The claims are generally directed to a surface-modified article, such as a glove and to a method of making the article. The article is made from an elastomeric matrix having an outside surface. In accordance with the present invention, a plurality of particles, such as colloidal silica particles, are adhered to at least a portion of the outside surface. As stated on page 7 of the specification and as now required in claim 12, the silica particles can be partially embedded within the outside surface of the elastomeric article (see Figure 2 also).

As defined in the specification, the outside surface of the glove refers to the exterior surface of the glove or the surface that is used to grasp objects. As stated on page 4 of the specification, the particles of the present invention are selectively present on the outside surface of the article to provide increased friction. In this manner, when applied to a glove, the glove has improved gripping properties. Further, it has been discovered that the particles provide improved gripping properties even when the outside surface of the glove is wet.

In the Office Action, independent claims 12 and 14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. Section 102 as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,332,612 to Payet, et al. Independent claim 1, on the other hand, was rejected under 35 U.S.C. Section 103 as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,620,773 to Nash in view of Payet, et al. Neither reference either alone or in combination, however, discloses an elastomeric

article or a process for making the article in which a plurality of particles, such as colloidal silica particles, are applied to the outside surface of the article. As such, it is believed that the claims as now amended patentably define over both references.

For example, Payet, et al. is particularly directed to forming a latex jacket around an article made of silicon elastomer (see column 2, lines 7 through 9). When applying the latex to the elastomer article, Payet, et al. teaches applying a continuous layer of hydrophilic inorganic pulverulent material on the surface of the elastomer article which assists in distributing the latex uniformly over the surface of the article and increasing the thickness of the latex layer.

Thus, instead of applying particles to the outside surface of an elastomeric article as defined in the present claims, Payet, et al. instead teaches placing inorganic particles in between an outer latex layer and an elastomeric article. Consequently, it is believed that the claims patentably define over Payet, et al.

The remaining reference cited in the Office Action against the independent claims, Nash, is directed to securely embedding silica particles in the inside surface layer or donning layer of a glove. The particles are embedded in the donning layer of the glove to provide a texturized surface which prevents blocking (i.e. prevents the gloves from sticking together) and provides a glove that is suitable for donning without the use of a lubricant such as powder. In fact, in column 3, at line 49, Nash states that the textured surface has a lowered coefficient of friction than a smooth surface which makes it easier for one to insert one's hand into the glove.

As such, the teachings of Nash are directly opposite to the present invention and therefore it is believed that Nash teaches away from the presently pending claims. For

example, instead of applying particles to the outside surface of an elastomeric article, such as a glove to improve the gripping properties of the glove, Nash teaches embedding silica particles in the donning layer of a glove to lower the coefficient of friction. When viewing Nash as a whole, it is respectfully submitted that it would not have been obvious to modify Nash in arriving at the presently pending claims.

In the Office Action, dependent claim 10 was also rejected under 35 U.S.C. Section 103 in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,851,266 to Momose, et al. Since claim 10 further limits and defines the invention of claim 1, however, it is believed that the claims also patentably define over Momose, et al.

In summary, it is respectfully submitted that the claims as currently amended are patentably distinct over the prior art of record. As such, it is believed that the claims are in complete condition for allowance and favorable action is therefore requested. Examiner Nolan, however, is encouraged and invited to telephone the undersigned at her convenience should any issues remain after consideration after this amendment.

Please charge any additional fees required by this Amendment to Deposit Account No. 04-1403.

Respectfully submitted,

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Appendix A.

12. (Amended) A surface-modified article, comprising:

an elastomeric matrix having [a] an outside surface; and

a plurality of colloidal silica particles adhered to at least a portion of the outside surface of the matrix but not extending through the thickness of the matrix, at least certain of said silica particles being partially embedded within the outside surface of said elastomeric matrix; the colloidal silica particles being affixed to the outside surface of the matrix without any separate binder material affixing the colloidal silica particles to the outside surface.

13. (Amended) A [The] surface-modified article [of claim 12], comprising:

an elastomeric matrix having a surface; and

a plurality of colloidal silica particles adhered to at least a portion of the surface of the matrix but not extending through the thickness of the matrix, the colloidal silica particles being affixed to the surface of the matrix without any separate binder material affixing the colloidal silica particles to the surface, wherein the colloidal silica particles are electrically conductive.

14. (Amended) A method for making an elastomeric article, comprising the steps of:

providing a mold whose surface defines at least a portion of the surface of the elastomeric article;

preparing a coating composition comprising a plurality of colloidal silica particles;

applying the coating composition to a surface of the mold;

contacting a flowable elastomer to the coated surface of the mold;

allowing the flowable elastomer to coalesce against the coated surface thereby forming an elastomeric article, said colloidal silica particles being adhered to said coalesced elastomer; and

separating the coalesced elastomer from the mold surface such that said coalesced elastomer is turned inside-out, said elastomeric article including an inside surface and an outside surface, said colloidal silica particles being adhered to said outside surface.